



Brent Exclusions **Guide for Parents and Carers**
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Queries about this document should be addressed to:

Ryan Manning
Inclusion Support Team Manager
Ryan.Manning@brent.gov.uk

Tina Murray
Service Manager for SEND Outreach Services
Tina.Murray@brent.gov.uk

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Introduction

Welcome to the Brent Parents' Guide on School Exclusions

This guide is designed to help you understand what happens if your child is suspended or permanently excluded from school, what your rights are, and what support is available.

We know this can be a stressful time for families. Our aim is to make the process clear and ensure your child continues to receive education and support.

Key points to remember:

- Exclusions must be **lawful, reasonable, and fair**.
- Schools cannot exclude a child for non-disciplinary reasons (such as SEND needs or parental disputes).
- Your child's education will continue during and after an exclusion.

Who can help?

- **Brent Inclusion Support Team** – advice and guidance throughout the process.
Email: schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk
- **SENDIASS** – impartial advice for families of children with SEND.
- **Independent advice services** such as Coram Children's Legal Centre and ACE Education ([contact details below](#))

Understanding Exclusions

Schools can exclude a pupil in two ways: **suspension** or **permanent exclusion**. Both are serious decisions and must follow strict legal rules.

What is a Suspension?

- A suspension (previously called a fixed-term exclusion) means your child is not allowed to attend school for a set number of days.
- It can be for one or more periods but **cannot exceed 45 school days in a single academic year**.
- During a suspension:
 - The school will provide work for your child to complete at home for the first five school days.
 - If the suspension lasts more than five days, the school must arrange suitable full-time education from day six.

What is a Permanent Exclusion?

- A permanent exclusion means your child will not return to their school unless reinstated by the Governing Board.
- This decision should only be made:
 - For a **serious breach or persistent breaches** of the school's behaviour policy.
 - Where allowing the pupil to remain would **seriously harm the education or welfare** of the pupil or others.
- After a permanent exclusion:
 - The school will send you a letter explaining the reason.
 - Brent will arrange full-time education from the sixth school day.
 - You have the right to attend a Governing Board meeting and, if necessary, request an Independent Review Panel (IRP).

Important Legal Points

- Exclusions must be **lawful, reasonable, and fair**.
- Schools **cannot exclude for non-disciplinary reasons**, such as:
 - SEND needs the school feels unable to meet.
 - A breakdown in the relationship with parents.
 - Failure to attend a reintegration meeting.
- Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or who are looked after should only be permanently excluded in **exceptional circumstances**.

What Happens After an Exclusion?

The steps after an exclusion are time-sensitive.

Here's what you can expect:

Day 1: Notification

- You will receive a letter from the school explaining:
 - The reason for the exclusion.
 - The length of the suspension or confirmation of permanent exclusion.
 - Your right to make representations to the Governing Board.
- The school will provide work for your child to complete at home for the first five school days.
- **Important:** Your child must not be in a public place during school hours for the first five days unless there is a good reason. Parents may face a penalty notice if this rule is broken.

Day 6: Education Arrangements

- If the exclusion lasts more than five school days:
 - The school (for suspensions) or Brent Council (for permanent exclusions) must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth day.
- For looked-after children, alternative provision should start **from day one**.

Day 15: Governing Board Meeting

- For permanent exclusions or suspensions over 15 days in a term:
 - The Governing Board must meet within **15 school days** to review the headteacher's decision.

- You have the right to attend this meeting, make representations, and request remote access if needed.

After the Governing Board Decision

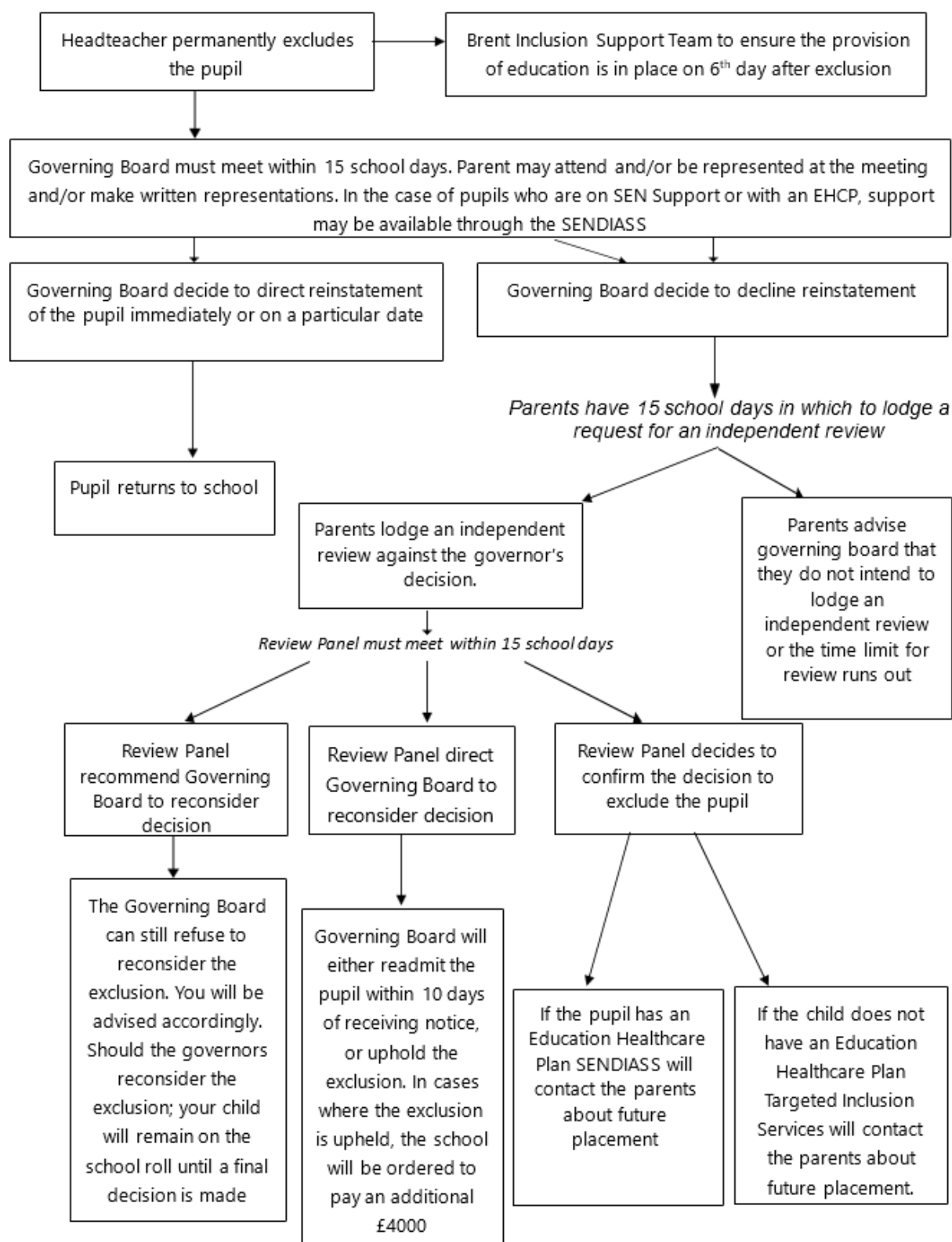
- If the exclusion is upheld:
 - You can request an **Independent Review Panel (IRP)** within **15 school days** of the decision letter.
- The IRP can:
 - Uphold the exclusion.
 - Recommend the Governing Board reconsiders its decision.
 - Quash the decision and direct reconsideration.

If You Do Not Request an IRP

- Your child will transfer to Brent's Pupil Referral Unit or another alternative provision.
- An Inclusion Support Officer will discuss options with you.

A flowchart of the exclusions process can be found on the next page.

Timeline of permanent exclusion process:



Your Rights and Responsibilities

As a parent or carer, you have important rights during the exclusion process, as well as responsibilities to ensure your child's education and welfare.

Your Rights

- To be informed:
 - You must receive a written letter on the day of the exclusion explaining the reason, length, and next steps.
- To make representations:
 - You can present your views to the Governing Board about the exclusion decision.
- To attend meetings:
 - You have the right to attend the Governing Board meeting and bring a friend or representative.
 - You can request remote access for Governing Board and Independent Review Panel (IRP) meetings.
- To request an Independent Review Panel (IRP):
 - If the Governing Board upholds a permanent exclusion, you can request an IRP within 15 school days of their decision letter.
 - The IRP can uphold, recommend reconsideration, or quash the decision.
- To access advice and support:
 - Brent Inclusion Support Team: schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk
 - SENDIASS and impartial advice services such as Coram Children's Legal Centre and ACE Education.
- To see your child's school record:
 - You can request a copy of your child's school record in writing (schools may charge for photocopying).

Your Responsibilities

- Ensure your child is not in a public place during school hours for the first five days of an exclusion unless there is a good reason. Failure to comply may result in a penalty notice.

- Support your child to complete work provided by the school during the first five days.
- Attend reintegration meetings after a suspension to help plan your child's successful return.
- Engage with any support offered, such as Pastoral Support Plans or managed moves.

Support Available

We understand that exclusions can be challenging for families. Brent offers a range of support services to help you and your child during this time.

Brent Inclusion Support Team

- Provides advice and guidance throughout the exclusion process.
- Helps schools and families explore alternatives to exclusion, such as Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs) or managed moves.
- Can attend meetings with you and liaise with schools.

SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service)

- Offers impartial advice for parents of children with SEND.
- Helps you understand your rights under the SEND Code of Practice.

Independent Advice Services

- Coram Children's Legal Centre
Free legal advice on education law.
Phone: 08088 020 008
Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com
- ACE Education
Advice on school exclusions and education law.
Phone: 03000 115 142 (Mon–Wed, 10am–1pm)
Website: www.ace-ed.org.uk

Other Support Options

- Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs):
A structured plan agreed between school, parents, and the child to prevent exclusion and improve behaviour.
- Managed Moves:
A voluntary agreement between schools and parents to give a child a fresh start in a new school.

- Alternative Provision:
Short-term placements to support behaviour improvement, with a clear reintegration plan.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Can my child be excluded for non-disciplinary reasons?

No. Schools cannot exclude a child because of SEND needs, a breakdown in the relationship with parents, or failure to attend a reintegration meeting. Exclusions must be for serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy.

2. What is the difference between a suspension and a permanent exclusion?

- Suspension: A fixed period when your child cannot attend school. Maximum 45 school days in a year.
- Permanent exclusion: Your child will not return to the school unless reinstated by the Governing Board.

3. What happens after my child is excluded?

- Day 1: You receive a letter explaining the reason and next steps.
- Day 6: Full-time education arranged by the school (for suspensions) or Brent (for permanent exclusions).
- Day 15: Governing Board meeting for permanent exclusions or suspensions over 15 days.
- After decision: You can request an Independent Review Panel (IRP) within 15 school days.

4. What are my rights as a parent?

- Attend Governing Board and IRP meetings (in person or remotely).
- Make representations about the exclusion decision.
- Request an IRP if the Governing Board upholds a permanent exclusion.
- Access impartial advice from SENDIASS, Coram, or ACE Education.

5. What does dual registration mean?

If your child attends alternative provision or is directed off-site:

- The home school remains the main registration.
- The other setting is a subsidiary registration.
- Attendance codes:
 - B – Education off-site (not dual registered)

- D – Dual registration
- E – Absent (no provision arranged)

6. What is a managed move and how is it different from off-site direction?

- Managed Move: A voluntary agreement for a fresh start at another school. Requires consent from parents and both schools.
- Off-Site Direction: A temporary placement at another setting to improve behaviour. Does not require parental consent but consultation is advised.

7. What if my child has an EHCP or is looked after?

Permanent exclusion should only happen in exceptional circumstances. An emergency annual review must be held before any change of placement.

8. Where can I get support?

- Brent Inclusion Support Team: schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk
- SENDIASS for SEND advice.
- Coram Children's Legal Centre and ACE Education for impartial legal advice.